



Missouri Department of Conservation
GRANT GUIDELINES
Discover Nature Schools
Nature Unleashed
2009–2010

GRANT GUIDELINES—These guidelines are specific to the *Nature Unleashed* program. You must contact your local Education Consultant to obtain the grant application.

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The purpose of the Discover Nature Schools program is to promote conservation education through instructional units that meet grade-level expectations and encourage hands-on outdoor learning experiences. Each unit is designed to increase student understanding and appreciation of our natural resources and our role in conserving them.

In an effort to assist as many teachers/schools as possible with funding towards implementing this unit (hereinafter referred to as *Nature Unleashed*):

- 1. One-time only (including pilot year) \$750 grants for materials will be awarded per school.**
- 2. Only one (1) reimbursement grant for transportation costs will be awarded per school per year.**
- 3. *Nature Unleashed* must be taught (as set forth below) to at least twenty (20) or more students.**

AGREEMENT DURATION

- 1. The application period of this Agreement begins August 1, 2009 and ends with the application deadline of March 1, 2010.**
- 2. Teaching of *Nature Unleashed* and related field experiences must be completed by May 21, 2010.**
- 3. By June 1, 2010 the following must be submitted:**
 - **Brief final report narrative**
 - **Average pre- and post-instruction test scores**
 - **Dated detailed receipts clearly showing proof of payment for approved grant expenditures**

MEASURABLE DELIVERABLES

MDC agrees to:

- 1. Furnish *Nature Unleashed*, an instructional unit on Missouri's pond, forest and prairie ecosystems. The *Nature Unleashed* unit consists of a student book, student science notebook and a teacher guide. The teacher guide features activities suitable for classroom and outdoor learning and meets specified science grade-level expectations for third through fourth grades but which may be suitable to teach in third through fifth grades.**
- 2. Provide required training (minimum of 6 hours) for all teachers using the *Nature Unleashed* unit.**
- 3. Provide grant funding for approved instructional materials relating directly to activities provided in the *Nature Unleashed* Teacher Guide and as listed in "Materials Funded by Grant."**
- 4. Provide grant funding for reimbursement of bus transportation costs for field experiences directly related to *Nature Unleashed*. (See "*Nature Unleashed* Field Trip Guidelines.")**
- 5. Provide a primary local MDC conservation education consultant contact.**



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Discover Nature School agrees to:

1. Designate a lead contact/teacher to make decisions and direct implementation of the program. **This person is responsible for submitting a completed grant report and dated detailed receipts clearly showing proof of payment no later than June 1, 2010.**
2. Require **all participating teachers** to complete training (minimum of 6 hours) **prior to initial delivery of *Nature Unleashed* in the classroom.**
3. Require all students to complete the eight core chapters (Chapters 1–8) from *Nature Unleashed* before May 21, 2010. Supplemental chapters may be taught in addition to the core chapters and solely at the discretion of the teacher.
4. Require all students to complete at least one *Nature Unleashed* instructional activity per lesson outdoors before May 21, 2010.
5. If field trip reimbursement option is chosen, require all students to complete a *Nature Unleashed* field trip as set forth in the "*Nature Unleashed* Field Trip Guidelines."
6. After completion of *Nature Unleashed*, submit dated detailed receipts (clearly showing proof of payment and dated five days from date of approval letter through May 21, 2010), average pre- and post-instruction test scores and a brief final report narrative no later than June 1, 2010.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

All students will complete *Nature Unleashed* as specified and experience at least eight related instructional activities in the outdoors in interaction with the natural environment.

FUNDING AND PAYMENT PROCESS

1. **The school will be notified with an approval letter accompanied with the initial payment. The grant period begins five days from the date of the approval letter. Costs incurred prior to grant period are ineligible for reimbursement.**
2. Payment to the Discover Nature School will be the actual costs as documented, with dated detailed receipts clearly showing proof of payment, up to the maximum amounts stated herein.
3. The Discover Nature School will receive 50 percent of the grant award for instructional materials for studies relating directly to *Nature Unleashed* following submission and approval of a signed Agreement.
4. All funds from MDC must be deposited in a timely manner.
5. The Discover Nature School shall provide documentation of required average pre- and post-instruction test scores, a brief final report narrative and dated detailed receipts clearly showing proof of payment for all costs associated with the approved Agreement by June 1, 2010, before final payment will be made.
6. The Discover Nature School will be reimbursed for bus transportation costs for field experiences after submission of dated transportation receipts. Transportation documentation must be an official bus company receipt or detailed receipt on school letterhead signed by a school administrator.
7. Final payment will be made upon completion of the program and submission and review of required grant narrative report, average test scores and dated detailed receipts clearly showing proof of payment.

APPROPRIATION

Funds for this project must be appropriated for each fiscal year and the Discover Nature School and MDC's obligations hereunder shall not be binding upon MDC for any period in which funds have not been appropriated.



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REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. The Discover Nature School shall contact the local MDC Conservation Education Consultant or Education Programs/Curriculum Supervisor if any changes in the project arise. All changes must be approved prior to implementation. Failure to do so may result in denial of payment.
2. If, for any reason, the Discover Nature School cannot complete *Nature Unleashed* and related field experience during the duration of the contract, further funds will not be provided, and any unused funds must be returned.

OWNERSHIP

1. Any equipment purchased with funds under this Agreement becomes the property of the Discover Nature School.
2. MDC reserves the rights to the copyright of all materials it produces and provides.

MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

1. **MDC's local Conservation Education Consultant shall monitor *Nature Unleashed* through ongoing informal monitoring by phone calls, on-site visits and e-mail.** The Education Curriculum/ Programs Supervisor or representative will monitor through desk review of financial information and *Nature Unleashed* reports.
2. After completion of *Nature Unleashed* is verified and final reports are approved, MDC shall process final payment.
3. The Discover Nature School shall allow MDC access to all financial records and/or audited financial statements related to this agreement.

TERMINATION

MDC retains the right to terminate the Agreement at any time, without penalty or recourse, by giving written notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of termination. All unused grant funds must be returned to MDC.

The Discover Nature School may terminate the Agreement with thirty (30) days of notice if agreed by MDC but must return all unused funds.

LEGAL COMPLIANCE, SAFETY & HOLD HARMLESS

The Discover Nature School shall agree to comply with all laws and regulations applicable to it, and to take all reasonable and lawfully required steps to ensure the safety of the public during the performance of the cooperative agreement and the provision of all public programs and activities furthered by it, and the Discover Nature School shall agree to indemnify and hold harmless MDC, and its agents and employees, from any claim or suit arising out of, or in connection with, the cooperative agreement and the provision of all public programs and activities furthered by it.

OTHER PROVISIONS

MDC shall be given appropriate credit in all publications, educational materials and in any media contacts related to *Nature Unleashed* and grant. Appropriate wording may include "The Missouri Department of Conservation provides the Discover Nature Schools program and grants so Missouri students learn to connect with nature and conserve it, too."



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GRANT ELIGIBILITY CHART

FIRST YEAR OF PARTICIPATION (includes pilot year)

☞ A field experience reimbursement grant per school of up to \$7 per student (*maximum of \$3500 per school*) to cover bus transportation costs for field experiences.

AND

* A one-time only grant per school of up to \$750 to purchase materials for instructional activities relating directly to *Nature Unleashed*. (**See “Materials Funded by Grant.”**)

* Grant funds disbursed as follows: 50 percent of approved amount for purchase of materials for instructional activities relating directly to *Nature Unleashed* ***upon notification of approval of Agreement***; balance reimbursed upon completion of *Nature Unleashed* and submission of required documentation. (See ☞ NOTE below.)

SUBSEQUENT YEARS OF PARTICIPATION

☞ A field experience reimbursement grant of up to \$7 per student (*maximum of \$3500 per school*) to cover bus transportation costs for field experiences.

(See ☞ NOTE below.)

☞ **NOTE:** Bus transportation costs shall be reimbursed 1) after receipt of required documentation and 2) along with the balance for instructional material costs. Documentation shall include a brief grant report narrative, average pre- and post-instruction test scores and ***dated detailed receipts clearly showing proof of payment (no packing slips)*** for all one-time only (including pilot year) *Nature Unleashed* materials and for bus transportation.

Please contact your local MDC Education Consultant (www.mdc.mo.gov/teacher/contacts) to obtain the grant application.



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MATERIALS FUNDED BY GRANT

This grant allows for a one-time only amount of \$750 for items that directly support essential activities found in the *Nature Unleashed* instructional unit. These items may be purchased in any combination or number based on a school's need. All purchases must be reflected on clear and legible original OR clear and legible copies of dated detailed receipts showing proof of payment.

ITEM

Binoculars
Thermometers
Field Guides
Butterfly/Insect Nets
Collection Boxes (with magnified covers)
Observation Containers (mini to small clear cases with covers)
Magnifiers/Hand lens/Loupes
Bird Feeders*
Shepherd Hooks
Bird Seed

PROVIDED FREE:

CD—MDC Singing Insects of Missouri (1)
CD—MDC Missouri Bird Calls (1)
CD—MDC Toads and Frogs (with poster) (1)

* Activities encourage teachers to have students design and create birdfeeders from recycled materials rather than purchase them with grant funds. However, one or two purchased feeders would be an acceptable purchase to implement the unit.



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NATURE UNLEASHED FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES*

OBJECTIVES

Students participating in a *Nature Unleashed* field trip will

- be introduced to a new (and possibly unfamiliar) ecosystem
- explore and investigate a new (and possibly unfamiliar) ecosystem
- demonstrate and apply skills and knowledge gained from *Nature Unleashed* activities to the planning and exploration of a new ecosystem
- demonstrate and apply use of science notebooks
- pose questions and predict answers to those questions about the new ecosystem
- plan, collect and organize data while conducting simple field investigations
- present findings and conclusions relating to the field investigations of the new ecosystem

In order to qualify for reimbursement of transportation costs for field trips taken in conjunction with the *Nature Unleashed* unit, field trips

- must be taken after all *Nature Unleashed* lesson essential activities have been completed
- must serve as an extension and culminating activity to the *Nature Unleashed* unit
- must occur at a natural, outdoor area/ecosystem (i.e., Conservation Area; State Park; National Forest; private property with areas representative of Missouri's ecosystems included in the *Nature Unleashed* student book; etc.)
- should provide students with opportunities to apply inquiry and field investigation skills and knowledge gained through activities in the *Nature Unleashed* unit
 - to an outdoor, natural area/ecosystem very different from their schoolyard ecosystem *OR*
 - to an outdoor, natural area/ecosystem reflecting at least one of the ecosystems discussed in the More to Explore supplement section of the student book *OR*
 - to an outdoor, natural area/ecosystem reflecting a pond, forest or prairie ecosystem that students would not normally have an opportunity to visit or explore

Meaningful opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills fully to the field trip experience would include

- pre-trip planning time for students to research the new ecosystem, pose questions, predict answers and plan simple field investigation strategies
- ample time for students to conduct simple, hands-on field investigations that allow students
 - to observe the living and non-living components of the ecosystem and the interactions among those components
 - to collect data related to and in support of their predictions
- ample post-trip time for students
 - to organize their data
 - to prepare and present short class presentations on their field investigations and findings/conclusions
- opportunities for students to demonstrate and apply skills gained through *Nature Unleashed* optional compass activities; compass field trip activities could possibly be prepared and set up by students for other students/teachers)

* Field trips that provide only naturalist-led programs, naturalist-led hikes, or adult lecture/demonstration stations do not qualify as *Nature Unleashed* field trips. *Nature Unleashed* field trip activities should be student-led and student-designed field investigations.